



*The smallest things become great when God requires them of us; they are small only in themselves; they are always great when they are done for God, and when they serve to unite us with Him eternally.*

*... François Fénelon*

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Anne Cahill, X-Press Editor

Office Hours: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Monday  
9:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Tues - Fri

Web: <http://users.rcn.com/staayer>

E-Mail: [staayer@rcn.com](mailto:staayer@rcn.com)

Tel: 978-772-2615

Fax: 978-772-6512

# THE PRESS

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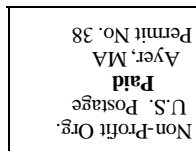
FEBRUARY, 2004

## Living the Disciplined Life

One word that seems to have gotten lost in our busy lives of work and play is the word “discipline.” In recent times it has taken on the meaning of restriction or even punishment. It is heard in the context of disciplining a child or a pet for undesirable behavior. It has lost much of its meaning of shaping and structuring of life.

A disciplined life means to take a stand for something that matters. It means to shape and sculpt our lives to be a clearer image of Christ. It is not punishment but rather, glorification of God through our personal witness of his power.

We stand on the cusp of Lent. On Ash Wednesday the whole body of Christ will be called to the observance of a Holy Lent. Lent is an invitation to intentionally and resolutely live a life that is not governed by appetite or other physical desires. Lent is an invitation to live more fully into the life God calls us to live in the world. Christians become, by the example of their lives, contrasts to the hedonistic world around us. The transformation doesn’t happen over night. Rarely does one change aberrant, sinful, or even lazy behavior in one day. The change takes time and takes a concerted effort. The change often times means stopping some habits and beginning new ones. Each step is crucial to the life of faith. That moment of change from one behavior to another is called repentance. It begins with examination and reflection and ends in turning from the old to the new. It also takes, what my father used to call,



St. Andrew's Episcopal Church  
7 Faulkner Street  
Ayer, Massachusetts 01432

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*The X-Press is the monthly newsletter of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church*

“good old fashioned will power.” Will power exercised in a regime of replacing harmful things with helpful things. Most of us find that easier by employing self-discipline. The old exercise slogan is spot on in regard to changing undesirable behavior and creating new ones, “No Pain, No Gain.” Like an exercise regime we might feel a bit sore working unaccustomed spiritual muscles. But the pay offs are spectacular. By the end of the forty days we may even notice that our knees have “toughed up” as a result of all the kneeling.

On Ash Wednesday the invitation will be extended to all of us to the “observance of a holy Lent... (Book of Common Prayer, 265) ” The Prayer Book goes further than just extending an invitation, it actually prescribes the ways we can observe a holy Lent, “by self-examination and repentance, by prayer, fasting, and self-denial, and by reading and meditating on God’s holy Word.” What we are invited to do is enter into the disciplined life of a Christian. Lent is about giving up and taking on. It is about leaving the old behind and beginning anew. The call to live a disciplined life is an invitation to set ourselves apart from the world we are in. It is also an invitation to a life rooted in a deep and profound relationship with God through repentance, prayer, self-denial, and spending time with the Scriptures.

Lent is the time to reevaluate our lives. It is a time to ask serious questions and examine our personal relationship with God. It is about asking, “Am I spending my time and energy in ways that brings me closer to God and my neighbor?” “What behavior do I most dislike in myself and how can I change it?” “I wonder what the book of Colossians is about?” “Am I really able to fast on Fridays?” “Could I give the money I would ordinarily spend on food to a homeless shelter or food bank?” Now is the time to examine and employ some discipline. It may sound like a commercial but it’s true, “Try it for forty days and you’ll see how your life will be enriched in ways unimagined.”

Your servant in Christ,  
**Scott+**

## Altar Guild Customary Workshop

Calling all Altar Guild Members! On Wednesday February 11<sup>th</sup> we will gather in the Church at 10:00 to compile a customary for the various liturgies within the Church. This time together is not only for our existing Altar Guild members but for anyone interested in learning more about the ins and outs of our liturgical life. You may ask yourself, “What is a customary?” A customary is a booklet containing the guidelines and procedures for various liturgies. It may also contain detailed description of accoutrements used in the liturgy and directions for how things are carried out in preparation for worship. It is hoped that we will spend a couple of hours compiling the customary to be used by the Altar Guild both now and for the future members. Please make plans to join us.

## Outreach Opportunity at Devens

Are you interested in showing hospitalized prisoners that God still loves them? A growing ministry will go in pairs, each month, to visit non-ambulatory inmates at the Federal Medical Center at Devens. Times to be decided by volunteers. There will be a few hour training session to prepare you. Please call Nancy Shepherd at (978) 897-6120 if you are interested.

### *Editor’s Note:*

*Next Issue: March 2004*

*Deadline: Friday, February 20th*

*Send submissions to: [acahill@hybricon.com](mailto:acahill@hybricon.com)*

*Or, drop off your submissions at the Church Office during office hours or in the Peabody Room on Sundays.*

*Questions? Please call me at:*

*H: (978) 448-4053*

*W: (978) 772-5422 x 323*

*Be sure to include your name and telephone number on all submissions!*

# Readings for February

## Sunday, February 1 – The Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

First Lesson: Jeremiah 1: 4-10

In the first reading, the prophet Jeremiah is called by God and demurs at first because of his youth.

Second Lesson: I Corinthians 14: 12b-20

The second reading today carries on Paul's teaching to the Corinthians about the proper use of spiritual gifts.

The Gospel: Luke 4: 21-32

In today's liturgy, we continue the account of Jesus' sermon, and its results, in his home synagogue.

## Sunday, February 8 – The Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

First Lesson: Judges 6: 11-24a

When Israel is being persecuted by the Midianites, God comes to Gideon and calls him to lead the people.

Second Lesson: I Corinthians 15: 1-11

As Paul nears the end of the first letter to Corinth he reminds his readers of the message he preaches: that Jesus died for our sins, that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day and appeared to Cephas (Peter) and the other apostles.

The Gospel: Luke 5: 1-11

As Jesus began the work in which he was manifested as God's Son he called and commissioned others to join him. In Luke's account of the calling of the first disciples Jesus joins them on what had been up until then an unsuccessful day of fishing.

## Sunday, February 15 – The Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany

First Lesson: Jeremiah 17: 5-10

In the first reading, God curses those who trust in mere mortals and blesses those who trust in God.

Second Lesson: I Corinthians 15: 12-20

As we near the end of I Corinthians, Paul continues to sum up his message. The

resurrection of Jesus is central to everything.

The Gospel: Luke 6: 17-26

Today we have another aspect of Jesus' manifestation (epiphany) as Son of God: his teaching.

## Sunday, February 22 – The Last Sunday after the Epiphany

First Lesson: Exodus 34: 29-35

The Old Testament reading gives us an event from the life of Moses in which the light of God shone forth from him.

Second Lesson: I Corinthians 12: 27 - 13: 13

In today's reading from I Corinthians, we have Paul's famous discourse on self-giving love.

The Gospel: Luke 9: 28-36

In Luke's account of the Transfiguration, we are told that the conversation between Jesus and Moses and Elijah concerned his departure, which he was to perform in Jerusalem.

## Wednesday, February 25 – Ash Wednesday

First Lesson: Isaiah 58: 1-12

Fasting which is not accompanied by an inner change in our behavior to others, especially the poor and the helpless, is condemned by God in the first reading.

Second Lesson: II Corinthians 5: 20b – 6: 10

Today the liturgy is intended to be a challenge to Christians people. It confronts us with the radical change in living which is the way of Christ.

The Gospel: Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-21

The ashes, the penitence, the fasting – all these are but the means to the goal of Ash Wednesday, of Lent, and of all Christian living: namely, repentance, new life, and ministry to others.

## Sunday, February 29 – The First Sunday in Lent

First Lesson: Deuteronomy 26: (1-4), 5-11

Today's scriptures present to us our solidarity

# Reflections

NEGLECT NOT THE GIFT THAT IS IN YOU (I Timothy 4:14)

Let this passage jump off the page and land in your heart. Implied is the fact that you have a special gift within you, a unique talent and ability, something the Lord Himself has granted you - something that, if used properly, will bring glory to God while fulfilling a personal sense of joy and accomplishment.

How do we determine what this gift is? Perhaps the first step is simply to acknowledge its existence. How many of us were ever told as children that we possessed such a gift? The knowledge of receiving a unique gift from our Maker, tailored just right for each one of us, has to provide hope and joy and opportunities.

Start looking for clues to determine your particular gift. What do you enjoy doing? What are you good at? What doesn't really feel hard to do - is fun? Is it hard to admit you are good at something, without pride, but humbly remembering it is a "gift"?

Stop wasting time doing things that you do not enjoy. Free yourself from some non-fulfilling activities and give yourself time and peace to find your gift - rather to let your gift find you. Make room for the Holy Spirit to work. Pray for enlightenment and discernment.

Finally, once your gift is known, do not neglect it. Find a way to put it to use. Sharing your gift with grateful thanks to meet the needs of God's people, a service you give out of the extraordinary grace God gives you. Let us thank God for His priceless gift.

- Excerpts from The St. Nina Quarterly, submitted by Jane Rockwell



# Ash Wednesday Services

**“I invite you, in the name of the Church,  
to the observance of a holy Lent...”**

Thus the Book of Common Prayer's liturgy for Ash Wednesday beckons us into a season of self-examination and repentance, by prayer, fasting, and self-denial and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word. And to make a right beginning of repentance. All are invited to come and worship and begin their own Lenten journey toward the cross and empty tomb. Ash Wednesday services will be held at 12 noon and 7:30 PM.

## Come Teach With Me

Just this week, I received interesting news from my teaching partner, Virginia Hunt, in our Upper Elementary Sunday School class; that she is going back to China to teach English! Our students have enjoyed her lessons since September and we will all miss her very much. How do you say "God Speed" in Chinese? But while Virginia flies away, I'm on my own teaching until June. I am, therefore, looking for a new teaching partner to share every other Sunday classes (best case scenario) or one-shot classes by anyone with an interest in teaching a class of third to sixth graders. Do you have a particular interest in the Old or New Testaments? A favorite Biblical figure? Episcopal liturgy? Lessons for living a Christian life? An arts and crafts project? - and wish to share this interest with our younger parishioners? Please contact me and we can discuss whatever teaching time you can afford my class.

- Nancy Barringer at 978-448-2125 or geonan@charter.net

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*He has great tranquillity of heart who cares neither for the praises nor the fault-finding of men. He will easily be content and pacified, whose conscience is pure. You are not holier if you are praised, nor the more worthless if you are found fault with. What you are, that you are; neither by word can you be made greater than what you are in the sight of God.*

Thomas [à Kempis](#), *Of the Imitation of Christ*

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## The Rt. Rev'd Thomas Shaw to visit St. Andrew's

On Sunday February 29<sup>th</sup>, our Diocesan Bishop Tom Shaw will make his Episcopal visitation to St. Andrew's. On this day we will have one service at 10:00 AM followed by a lunch and time with the Bishop. As many of you may remember, The Rt. Rev'd Gayle Harris visited with us on the exact same day (The First Sunday in Lent). Her visit was one of the highlights mention in our Ministry Development meetings. No doubt this year's visitation promises the same. Due to the opportunity we have to participate in the Concord River Deanery confirmation in May, The Bishop will be able to devote more time to parochial issues and concerns. To that end, the Bishop has scheduled his time with us to include: time with the entire parish, with individual commissions, and time with the vestry. It is always exciting when we are able to spend time with our Bishops. Please mark your calendars and make plans to be at St. Andrew's to meet the Bishop.

## Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper

Mardi Gras is just around the corner. On Tuesday February 24<sup>th</sup> we will gather once again and join in the age-old custom of "shriving" the fat in our households. Shrove Tuesday comes from the word "shriving", which means confessing and absolving. The Tuesday before Ash Wednesday was traditionally the day for hearing confessions. The "shriving" of Fat Tuesday was also the activity of consuming all animal fat in the house in preparation for the 40 day Lenten fast.



This year we gather to eat our share of pancakes, burn the Palm Sunday Palms (for the ashes to be used on Ash Wednesday) and enjoy the feast before the great Lenten Fast. Everyone is invited to help out with the supper and join in the feasting.

# Lenten Quiet Day

Quiet Days are customary in preparation for any fast season. Religious communities throughout the world have set aside time for preparation and reflection preceding a religious fast. St. Andrew's also observes this custom. A quiet day was observed in preparation for last year's Lenten fast, as was the case for Advent. This year our Lenten Quiet Day will be held Monday February 23<sup>rd</sup> from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. The day will be a time for quiet, reflection, and prayer in preparation of the upcoming fast. There will be a sign-up sheet in the Peabody Room several weeks prior to the quiet day. Please set aside this time and join us for what many of us need in our busy lives—quiet!

## Outreach Commission Update

The following is an excerpt from the letter St. Andrew's received from The Rev. Ennis Duffis, Priest-In-Charge, Grace Episcopal Church, Lawrence, Massachusetts; the children in the Grace Church after-school program received gifts from the parish's 2003 Christmas Giving Tree:

"On behalf of the parishioners of Grace Church, and especially the children of the parish, I want to express our sincere thanks to the good people of St. Andrew's for the Christmas gifts. Those children who received gifts from St. Andrew's were extremely happy; many of the recipients later said that these were the best gifts they ever received.

Please convey our deepest appreciation to the congregation for the gifts that made a wonderful Christmas for so many children in our parish. May God's blessing be upon the good people of your parish."

Father Ennis had planned to worship with us December 14, but was ill and unable to join us. Clearly, we made a difference in the lives of many of Grace Church children this past Christmas.

# St. Andrew's Godly Play February 2004

## February 2004 Schedule of Stories and Wondering Questions

<u>Date</u>	<u>Pre-school – K</u>	<u>1st—3rd</u>
Feb. 1	Parable of Parables	Parable of Parables
Feb. 8	Parable of the Sower	Parable of the Sower
Feb. 15	Parable of the Good Samaritan	Parable of the Good Samaritan
Feb. 22	Good Shepherd & World Communion	Good Shepherd & World Communion
Feb. 29	Faces of Christ I	Faces of Christ I
Mar. 7	Faces of Christ II	Faces of Christ II

### Parable of Parables

*This lesson helps children understand what is really inside a parable. We use nested boxes to explore this unique literary form.*

I wonder who is going to make the next parable box? I wonder what the box could really be? I wonder what the whole line of boxes makes? I wonder what kind of box is just right for you?

### Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1-9)

*This parable describes Jesus' promise of an abundant harvest, and is followed by an allegory that expresses the concerns of the first century Church.*

I wonder if the birds have names? I wonder what the harvest could really be? I wonder what the person was doing when the little seeds could not get their roots in among the stones? And more...

### Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-35, also Mark 12:28-34 and Matthew 22:34-40)

*In this lesson we explore the Jesus' answer to "What is the most important thing in life?"*

Who is the neighbor to this one? This one? How about this one? I wonder what would

happen if the person finding the injured traveler was a child? What if the people in the parable were women?

### Good Shepherd & World Communion

*This is a core lesson for your child. The images of the Good Shepherd and Holy Communion deepen each other's interpretation when set side by side in this lesson.*

I wonder if you have ever come close to this table? I wonder where this table could really be? I wonder if the people are happy around the table? I wonder if you have ever heard the words of the Good Shepherd? I wonder where the bread and wine could really be? I wonder where this whole place could really be?

### Faces of Christ I and II

*Lent is the season when we prepare for the mystery of Easter. We move toward the Mystery by hearing stories of Christ's journey to the cross and resurrection. The first Sunday we focus on the face of Christ as a newborn child. The next Sunday, we add the face of Christ as the One who was lost and found.*

# February 2004

## St. Andrew's Church

Tel: (978) 772-2615  
 Office Hours: Monday 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
 Tu - Fri 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

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